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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

SPECIAL

February 10, 1984

OLL # 84-02

LEGISLATIVE REFERRAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislative Liaison Officer-
Department of State
Department of Defense
Central Intelligence Agency
National Security Agency

STAT

coordinated [redacted] [6F20 HQ] - no objection -- per phone call to Tracy Lawler on 2/14/84 I stated that CIA had no objection RDP

SUBJECT: ACDA draft report on H.J.Res. 87, H.J.Res. 98, and H.J.Res. 120, resolutions dealing with space arms control. (We have been advised by ACDA that your agency has already reviewed the attached informally).

The Office of Management and Budget requests the views of your agency on the above subject before advising on its relationship to the program of the President, in accordance with OMB Circular A-19.

A response to this request for your views is needed no later than WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1984.

Questions should be referred to Tracey Lawler (395-4710) the legislative analyst in this office.

Ronald K. Peterson

RONALD K. PETERSON FOR
Assistant Director for
Legislative Reference

Enclosures
cc:
Al Burman
John Eisenhour

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UNITED STATES ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY
Washington, D.C. 20451

OFFICE OF
THE DIRECTOR

Dear Mr. Chairman,

I am writing in response to your predecessor's letter of November 15, 1983, giving me the opportunity to comment on H.J. Res. 87, H.J. Res. 98 and H.J. Res. 120.

H.J. Res. 87 and H.J. Res. 120 call for initiation of space arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union. This issue has been under study by the U.S. Government for some time, during recent months more intensively than ever.

As you know, the United States has a long-standing commitment to effective arms control that improves U.S. and allied security and reduces the risk of war. This includes significant efforts in the space arms control area. The US commitment was in part responsible for the leading role which the United States took in the negotiation of a number of existing major international agreements that impose limits on space weapons, including the Outer Space Treaty, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and the Limited Test Ban Treaty which H.J. Res. 87 mentions in its preambular paragraphs. It also led to our proposal to the USSR for bilateral negotiations on anti-satellite arms control, which brought about the three rounds of talks held in 1978-79. The commitment today is reflected in the U.S. National Space Policy, announced by the President July 4, 1982, which states:

> "The United States will continue to study space arms control options. The United States will consider verifiable and equitable arms control measures that would ban or otherwise limit testing and deployment of specific weapons systems, should those measures be compatible with United States national security."

The 1978-79 talks sought agreement limiting ASAT capabilities and use. These talks, however, revealed significant substantive differences between the two sides. Further study

The Honorable
Dante B. Fascell
Chairman
Committee on House Foreign
Affairs
House of Representatives

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since then has brought the potential problems of space arms control into sharper focus. Until we have determined whether there are, in fact, practical solutions to these problems, we do not believe it would be productive to engage in formal bilateral or multilateral negotiations of specific arms control measures.

H.J. Res. 87 and 120 both state that the arms control agreements they advocate should be verifiable. Verification is one of the central problems of anti-satellite arms control. Satellites that serve U.S. and allied national security are few in number, so that any cheating on an anti-satellite ban, even on a small scale, could pose a disproportionate risk to the U.S.

An example of the difficulty inherent in verification is the Soviet ASAT interceptor system, which has been operational for over a decade. To date, no satisfactory way has been found of effectively verifying elimination of this interceptor under an ASAT ban. It is relatively small and is fitted to a Soviet space booster used for other space launch missions. We do not know how many such ASAT systems have been manufactured, and it would be relatively easy for the USSR to maintain a covert supply for use in a crisis.

Verification problems apply to other aspects of ASAT arms control as well. Simply determining whether an object hundreds of kilometers above the earth has in fact been attacked can, in some cases, be extremely difficult. To date, Soviet space arms control proposals have addressed none of these verification difficulties.

In addition, the threat of rapid breakout would be inherent in an arms control agreement which banned all anti-satellite systems. Breakout potential could exist even if the Soviets, upon agreeing to a ban on ASAT systems, were to destroy all of their existing systems. The Soviets could retain the technology to rebuild quickly a system in which they would have confidence. In the event of such a breakout, US space assets previously thought secure would suddenly be threatened. The U.S. could proceed with passive defensive measures for its satellites, but given the long lead-time inherent in the design and development of space systems such measures would take an extended period to develop and deploy. In addition they would be very expensive and might not be totally effective. Thus, breakout potential is an important element in assessing the merits of space arms control provisions.

There are also problems in defining what constitutes a space weapon. For example, ground-based anti-ballistic missiles, such as the 100 nuclear interceptors permitted the USSR by the ABM

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Treaty and which are deployed around Moscow, could be fired from their silos in direct attacks against satellites overhead. Furthermore, some non-weapons space systems could have characteristics which make them difficult to distinguish from weapons systems.

The Soviet ASAT has the capability to attack US low-altitude satellites in a broad spread of orbital inclinations. The Administration is currently pursuing the Miniature Vehicle program so as to provide a capability to deter Soviet attack on U.S. satellites and those of our Allies, and, within such limits as are imposed by international law, to deny any adversary the use of space-based systems that provide support to hostile military forces. In addition to the Soviets' existing anti-satellite weapon, there is a growing threat posed by present and prospective Soviet satellites which, while not weapons themselves, are designed to support directly the USSR's terrestrial forces in the event of a conflict, for example to provide targetting information on U.S. and allied surface fleets. These satellites can be destabilizing if they provide information needed for the conduct of surprise attacks against US and allied forces. U.S. development of an anti-satellite capability is also partly in response to this threat.

The Adminstration is continuing to study both the specific and general difficulties which have been described above. It is in the process of assessing the merits of a number of anti-satellite arms control proposals. An interagency group composed of the Departments of State and Defense, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and other agencies has been exploring a broad range of possible ASAT arms control options and the difficult issues involved in outer space arms control. In addition, the United States has been actively involved in establishing a working group to discuss outer space issues at the 40-nation Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, with a view to determining what, if, any new arrangements might be needed or desirable to further the peaceful uses of space.

H. Con. Res. 98 calls for support for the President's efforts to develop strategic defensive systems to make nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete. I certainly agree with the general thrust of the resolution, and believe it would be helpful for the Congress to go on record as supporting the President's decisions on this subject.

However, on such an important subject, I believe the support should be expressed very carefully and should be focussed more on the President's decision to pursue a research and development program.

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I believe the resolution would benefit if its language were changed to reflect more closely the precise form of the President's recommendations. In his speech of March 23, he stated that "consistent with our obligations of the ABM Treaty and recognizing the need for closer consultation with our Allies... I am directing a comprehensive and intensive effort to define a long-term research and development program to begin to achieve our ultimate goal of eliminating the threat posed by strategic nuclear missiles."

The President also noted that such an effort could pave the way for arms control measures to eliminate ballistic missiles themselves, and noted that the United States "will continue to pursue real reductions in nuclear arms, negotiating from a position of strength that can be ensured only by modernizing our strategic forces." Some reference to these elements also might be desirable. With such changes, I believe the resolution would be of significant assistance toward the President's objectives.

Sincerely,

Kenneth L. Adelman

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